

Message Text

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E. O. 11652: GDS
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SUBJECT: PREPARATIONS FOR NAC CONSULTATION ON SALT

REF: STATE 042975

1. WE AGREE WITH WASHINGTON VIEWS CONCERNING NEED TO
RESOLVE ERW ISSUE BEFORE SUMMIT. WE BELIEVE THAT WHILE
SOME ALLIES MAY REACT NEGATIVELY AT FIRST TO OUR CALL FOR
DECISION, MOST WILL ULTIMATELY RECOGNIZE SOUNDNESS OF
OUR POSITION AND WELCOME US MOVE TO FORCE ALLIANCE TO
COME TO GRIPS WITH THIS ISSUE NOW.

2. AS WASHINGTON NOTES, THERE IS A STRONG INTEREST
AMONG ALLIES IN A LINK BETWEEN ERW AND ARMS CONTROL. WE
BELIEVE ALLIES WILL ALSO REALIZE THAT THERE IS NO
PERFECT WAY TO FORGE THIS LINK.

3. NONETHELESS, THERE ARE SOME QUESTIONS WHICH OCCUR
TO US AND WHICH MAY ALSO OCCUR TO ALLIES CONCERNING THE
PROPOSED LINK. WE WISH TO FLAG THEM IN ORDER TO ASSIST
WASHINGTON IN PREPARING ITS PRESENTATION TO THE NAC.

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(A) WE ARGUE THAT THE RATIONALE FOR ERW PRODUCTION AND
DEPLOYMENT IS TNF MODERNIZATION, THE NEED TO COUNTER
SOVIET ARMORED FORCES AND TO ENHANCE DETERRENCE AND
STABILITY. IN SHORT IT IS A NECESSARY BATTLEFIELD
SYSTEM. IF THE SOVIETS AGREE TO FOREGO DEPLOYMENT OF THE
SS-20 (A REGIONAL SYSTEM AND NOT A BATTLEFIELD THREAT),

IN RETURN FOR OUR FOREGOING DEPLOYMENT OF THE ERW, HOW THEN WILL WE PROPOSE TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM WHICH WE ARGUE LED US TO WANT TO PRODUCE AND DEPLOY THE ERW?

-- IF WE PROPOSE CONVENTIONAL SOLUTIONS TO THESE PROBLEMS, WHY WON'T THESE SOLUTIONS DO AS WELL AS THE ERW IN THE FIRST PLACE?

-- IF WE SAY WE WILL DEAL WITH THE ARMOR THREAT THROUGH MBFR, WHAT NEW INCENTIVES CAN WE OFFER THE SOVIETS TO REDUCE THE DISPARITY?

-- PUT ANOTHER WAY, IT'S FINE TO CITE THE SS-20 "STRATEGIC" SYSTEM AS A HIGH COLLATERAL DAMAGE DESTABILIZING WEAPON AS THE PRESIDENT DID IN WARSAW, AND TO ARGUE THAT THE SOVIETS THEREFORE HAVE NO RIGHT TO TERM OUR LOWER COLLATERAL DAMAGE BATTLEFIELD WEAPON AS "DEHUMANIZING." BUT ARE WE NOT IN OUR PROPOSED LINK MIXING BATTLEFIELD ORANGES WITH STRATEGIC REGIONAL SYSTEM APPLES IN A WAY THAT CAN COME BACK TO HAUNT US?

-- WOULD NOT A LESS PRECISE REFERENCE TO OUR WILLINGNESS TO FOREGO ERW DEPLOYMENT IF THE SOVIETS TAKE EQUIVALENT AND BALANCING STEPS EQUALLY MEET THE ARMS LINK NEEDS?

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-- MIGHT NOT THE LOGIC BEHIND THE ABOVE QUESTIONS LEAD OUR INFORMED PUBLICS TO SPECULATE AND THE SOVIET PROPAGANDISTS TO ARGUE THAT THE ERW SS-20 LINK WAS PROPOSED BECAUSE WE ANTICIPATED IT WOULD BE TURNED DOWN?

(B) WE SAY THE U. S. WOULD ANNOUNCE ITS DECISION TO PRODUCE THE ERW LOOKING TO ITS INITIAL DEPLOYMENT IN EUROPE IN ABOUT TWO YEARS. THIS SUGGESTS WE WOULD NOT HALT THE PROCESS EVEN IF THE SOVIETS SAY THEY ARE WILLING TO TALK ABOUT FOREGOING SS-20 DEPLOYMENT. IF AN AGREEMENT WERE REACHED DURING OR AFTER THE TWO-YEAR PERIOD, WE WOULD NOT DEPLOY IN EUROPE OR WOULD RETURN (OR DISARM?) THE WEAPON TO THE U. S.

-- BUT IN DISCUSSING AN ALLIED STATEMENT WE SAY THE ALLIES WOULD ACCEPT ERW DEPLOYMENT "IF THE SOVIETS FAILED TO BEGIN UNDERLINE RESPOND END UNDERLINE TO THE ARMS CONTROL OFFER." DOES THIS MEAN THAT A MERE SOVIET WILLINGNESS TO TALK WILL CONSTITUTE A "RESPONSE," THUS LEAVING OPEN THE PROSPECT OF AN INDEFINITE DELAY IN DEPLOYMENT?

-- ARE WE STATING AN UNAMBIGUOUS DECISION TO PRODUCE AND DEPLOY FOR OURSELVES WHILE LEAVING AN ELEMENT OF AMBIGUITY CONCERNING THE APPROACH WE EXPECT OUR ALLIES TO TAKE.

-- IF THE LATTER, HOW WOULD WE DEAL WITH A FUDGED OR UNHELPFUL SOVIET RESPONSE DESIGNED TO SPIN OUT TALKS WHILE THE ERW REMAINS UNDEPLOYED AND THE SOVIETS CONTINUE TO SCORE PROPAGANDA POINTS?

4. FINALLY, WE BELIEVE ALLIES WILL WANT TO KNOW WHETHER WASHINGTON IS PLANNING AN ACTIVE CAMPAIGN TO COUNTER THE PREDICTABLE STEPPED-UP SOVIET PROPAGANDA OUTBURST WHICH WILL FOLLOW A DECISION TO PRODUCE AND DEPLOY.

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